

Top tips for coping with exam stress



A guide for young people

What is stress?

Stress is usually a reaction to mental or emotional pressure.

When you're feeling anxious or scared, your body releases stress hormones such as adrenaline and cortisol.

Stress can cause physical symptoms such as a faster heartbeat or sweating. If you're stressed all the time it can become a problem.

What does stress look like?



Difficulty concentrating



Headaches



Mood swings



Irritability



Stomach aches



Nail biting



Restless

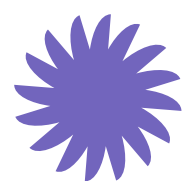
Ways to stress less



Practice gratitude and mindfulness



Spend time doing breathing and grounding techniques



Listen to calming music



Spend time in nature, sunlight and fresh air will boost serotonin levels



Make time for the things you enjoy most



Get up and move regularly



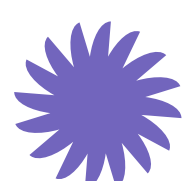
Practice sleep hygiene and get a good night's rest



Be physically active every day



Spend time with loved ones



Read a book

Plan ahead for your exams

- Have your own revision timetable - start planning well before exams begin
- Make your books, notes and essays user-friendly
- Take notes of the important points when revising
- Make revision cards and ask your family and friends to test you
- Remember everyone revises differently, find out what routine suits you best - alone or with a friend or parent/carer; early morning or late at night; short, sharp bursts or longer sessions; with music or without noise
- Ask for help from your teacher, parent or a friend if there are things you don't understand
- Reduce your phone usage or how often or in what way you use your phone

Don't

- Leave revision to the last minute
- Avoid revising subjects you don't like or find difficult
- Cram ALL your revision into the night before an exam

Be kind to yourself

- It's important to eat and sleep well
- Put yourself first - this is an important time for you
- Try to talk to your family about how they can make revising a little easier for you - for example, by agreeing times when you can have your own space, when they will try to be a little quieter around the house and when you'd rather not be disturbed
- Connect with your support networks; family and friends, teachers, revision clubs etc.
- Take time out from revision and do things that distract you or help you to relax
- Reward yourself for small wins

Don't

- Revise ALL the time
- Forget to give yourself time for relaxing
- Forget to be a young person! Play out, watch TV, do you!

Prepare for exam day

- Start the day with a good healthy and nutritious breakfast
- Give yourself plenty of time to get to the exam hall
- Make sure you have everything you need for the exam including pencils, pens and a calculator - a bottle of water and some tissues is often a good shout too!
- Try a breathing exercise if you feel overwhelmed to help calm your nerves
- Take your time and read the instructions and questions - ask an examiner if anything is unclear
- Plan how much time you'll need for each question and don't panic if you need to come back to something at the end
- Once the exam is finished, forget about it - remember that all you can do is your best on the day!

Don't

- Cram ALL your revision into the night before an exam
- Compare answers with friends
- Forget that you've done your best and your best is fine

Top tips from young people



If there is a choice, start by answering the question you feel most confident in answering



If you are stuck on a question, go to the next one, you can always come back to it later



If you are really stuck, try to have an intelligent guess anyway



Leave time to read through and check your answers before the exam finishes



Examiners will tell you countdowns during the exam but don't let this overwhelm you, it is to guide you

Everything will be ok

Take a break if you need to.

Remember you can always ask for help if you need it.

You are more capable than you know.

Take baby steps, one thing at a time.

You've got this.

Support services

Partnership Support

Hull & East Yorkshire

Mind

01482 240200

heymind.org.uk

Hull Thrive

howareyoufeeling.org.uk

Young Healthy Minds

eastridinghealthandwellbeing.co.uk

SUPPORT

National Support

Childline

0800 1111

childline.org.uk

Young Minds

youngminds.org.uk

Anna Freud

annafreud.org

Kooth

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